

Roads and Regionalism

4-14-04

Our colleagues on the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' Air Quality Committee, Phil Mendelson and Eric C. Olson, advocated public transportation to the exclusion

of road construction in their March 20 letter. They represent the priorities of city dwellers (the District and College Park)—a population of 600,000 people and a combined area of 61 square miles, with 36.6 percent of D.C. residents using transit to get to work.

We represent suburbia. In Montgomery and Fairfax counties, with a combined population of more than 1.9 million and 900 square miles, roughly 10 percent of our residents commute by transit. Most of our residents are inclined to drive, and they are likely to stay that way.

Responsible leaders must take that fact into account. Our driving residents demand more and improved roads. Roughly 50 percent of D.C. workers and, on average, 80 percent of Montgomery and Fairfax employees drive to work.

Roads are important to all jurisdictions. That's fairness, that's balance and that's regionalism.

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